

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SAA-01 SSM-05
CIAE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-02
SP-02 SS-15 SSO-00 INRE-00 /092 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND:RGH/JC
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR.KORN
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. MARTHINSEN
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

-----093773 150218Z /21

O 142327Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
DOD
JCS WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000
USICA
NSC WASHDC 0000
USCINCUEUR VAIHINGEN GE
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - AUGUST 14

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR AUGUST 14,
1978. SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

MR. CARTER: I WOULD NOTE THAT HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN
RELEASED A STATEMENT, FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH AMBASSA-
DOR ATHERTON ON SATURDAY, EXPRESSING HIS SUPPORT FOR THE
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MEETING PRESIDENT CARTER IS HAVING AT CAMP DAVID WITH
PRIME MINISTER BEGIN AND PRESIDENT SADAT.

WE GREATLY APPRECIATE KING HUSSEIN'S SUPPORT FOR THE CAMP
DAVID MEETING, AND HOPE THAT IT WILL PRODUCE A FRAMEWORK
FOR MOVING TOWARD A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT IN THE
ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT WE ALL SEEK.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEWS ON THE REPORTED ISRAELI DECISION
TO GO AHEAD WITH FIVE MORE MILITARY SETTLEMENTS?

A. NO, THAT ISN'T THE WAY I UNDERSTAND IT. THERE HASN'T
BEEN ANY ACTION BY THE ISRAELI CABINET ON THESE SETTLEMENTS

WE HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT ON THE
SUBJECT, AND ARE AWAITING THEIR RESPONSE. THE U.S.
POSITION ON THIS SUBJECT IS UNCHANGED.

Q. WHEN WERE YOU IN TOUCH WITH THE ISRAELIS?

APPARENTLY WORD OF THIS TENTATIVE DECISION BY THE
COMMITTEE HAS BEEN OUT IN ISRAEL, BUT UNREPORTED BY THE

PRESS. SO I PRESUME THAT THE EMBASSY WAS AWARE OF THIS.

A. TODAY.

Q. JUST TODAY?

A. YOU UNDERSTAND THAT EVENTS MOVED A LITTLE BIT TODAY ON THIS SUBJECT, IN ANY CASE.

Q. DID THE SECRETARY KNOW THAT THERE WAS ANY CONSIDERATION BEING GIVEN TO THESE FIVE SETTLEMENTS AT THE TIME THAT HE WAS THERE?

A. NO. THAT IS MY UNDERSTANDING.
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Q. JUST FOR THE RECORD, YOU SAY THE U.S. POSITION IS UNCHANGED. COULD YOU STATE THAT POSITION FOR US ONCE MORE?

A. NO. IT IS WHAT WE HAVE ALWAYS SAID, AND I AM NOT HERE REPEATING IT FOR THE SAKE OF REPEATING IT. I WILL BE GLAD TO GET YOU THE RECORD ON IT.

Q. YOU APPARENTLY HAVE INFORMATION THAT APPEARS TO BE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT IS BEING REPORTED. YOU SAY THAT A DECISION HAS NOT BEEN TAKEN?

A. THAT IS CORRECT. THERE IS NO CABINET DECISION ON IT.

Q. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE STATUS TO BE THEN.

A. I UNDERSTAND THAT ANYTHING THAT IS GOING TO BE CONSIDERED WILL BE CONSIDERED AFTER THE CAMP DAVID MEETING.

Q. IN EFFECT, THEY ARE PUTTING IT OFF UNTIL AFTER THE CAMP DAVID MEETING?

A. YES, THAT IS WHAT I SAID. NO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN.

Q. WHEN DID THE U.S. GOVERNMENT LEARN OF THE ANNOUNCEMENT YESTERDAY?

A. I DONT KNOW. I DONT KNOW WHETHER IT WAS BY NEWSPAPER REPORTS, WHICH I BELIEVE IT WAS BECAUSE THE FBIS CAME OUT WHILE THE CABINET MEETING WAS STILL IN SESSION. SOMEONE CAME OUT AND SAID THIS DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN, WHILE
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THE CABINET MEETING HAS NOT YET CONCLUDED TODAY.

NOW, WE ARE TALKING ABOUT TODAY. ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT THE ANNOUNCEMENT YESTERDAY?

Q. YES.

A. THE NEWSPAPER REPORT IS THE BEST I HAVE. I DONT KNOW. IF YOU WANT THAT IN DETAIL, AS TO WHETHER WE LEARNED ABOUT IT FIRST FROM AN AMBASSADOR OR SOMETHING, I WILL SEE IF I CAN FIND OUT. I DONT KNOW.

Q. IS IT YOUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE WILL BE NO CONSIDERATION UNTIL AFTER THE CAMP DAVID MEETING BASED ON SOME ASSURANCE FROM THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT?

A. NO, I BASE IT ONLY ON THE NEWS REPORTS THAT I HAVE SEEN -- PARTICULARLY OF THE CABINET MEETING TODAY.

Q. HAVE YOU BEEN TOLD ANYTHING AS A RESULT OF YOUR INQUIRIES?

A. I DONT THINK WE HAVE ANY REPLY YET.

Q. AT WHAT LEVEL WERE THESE INQUIRIES MADE?

A. THEY WERE MADE AT THE DIPLOMATIC LEVEL. I MEAN, IT WILL BE THROUGH OUR AMBASSADOR.

Q. WAS IT HERE OR IN ISRAEL?

A. WE SENT OUT THERE FOR A REPLY.

Q. DO YOU THINK IT IS A GOOD THING THAT THEY HAVE POSTPONED THIS DECISION UNTIL AFTER THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT?

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A. I DONT HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO SAY ON THIS AT THIS TIME.

Q. IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT IN ANY WAY ENGAGED IN ATTEMPTS TO BRING ABOUT AN END TO THE FACTION WARFARE OR WOULD YOU BE IN A POSITION TO EXPRESS YOUR CONCERN ABOUT THE

ESCALATING NATURE OF THE LEBANESE STRIFE WHICH AT ANY

MOMENT COULD EXPLODE INTO ANOTHER CIVIL WAR?

A. WELL WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN BEFORE, AND I'VE INDICATED BEFORE THAT WE ARE TALKING TO A NUMBER OF THE PARTIES THERE. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER I WOULD TODAY DESIGNATE THE SITUATION AS ESCALATING.

Q. THE LATEST INCIDENT DIDN'T CALL FOR ANY RESPONSE?

A. ANY INCIDENT, OBVIOUSLY, IS UNWELCOME BUT IT IS MY OWN IMPRESSION THAT, AS OPPOSED TO MAYBE A WEEK AGO, OR CERTAINLY A MONTH AGO, IT IS NOT ESCALATING. IF YOU MEAN THE SPECIFIC KIND OF VIOLENCE WE SAW EARLIER -- THE SYRIAN-CHRISTIAN AND OR THAT SORT OF THING -- I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NEW TO OFFER ON THAT.

Q. HAVE YOU ANY COMMENT ON THE LATEST INCIDENT, THE BUILDING IN THE INTER-PALESTINIAN --

A. YES, I HAVE SOMETHING HERE.

WE HAVE RECEIVED ONLY FRAGMENTARY REPORTING ON THIS INCIDENT, BUT THERE WERE OBVIOUSLY MANY KILLED AND WOUNDED. AT THIS POINT, IT IS NOT CLEAR TO US WHO IS RESPONSIBLE. THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US, HOWEVER, INDICATES THAT IN ADDITION TO FEDAYEEN OFFICES, THE UNCLASSIFIED

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BUILDING CONTAINED APARTMENTS HOUSING LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN CIVILIANS. SOME REPORTS BASE THE CASUALTIES AS WELL OVER 100, AND WE DEEPLY REGRET THE LOSS OF INNOCENT LIVES AMONG A POPULATION WHICH HAS ALREADY SUFFERED GREATLY.

I DON'T KNOW MUCH MORE. GOING BACK TO YOUR QUESTION, WE DID RECEIVE REPORTS ON SOME ESSENTIALLY MINOR FIGHTING OVER THE WEEKEND. FIRING, THAT IS, AND FOR THE MOST PART WE STILL REGARD THE CEASEFIRE AS BEING GENERALLY EFFECTIVE.

Q. COULD YOU TELL US WHAT THE SECRETARY'S PLANS ARE NOW FOR THE FORSEEABLE FUTURE?

A. YES, FOR THE FORSEEABLE FUTURE. IMMEDIATELY AFTER LUNCH HE IS GOING OUT TO MIDDLEBURG, TO MEET WITH HIS IMMEDIATE MIDDLE EASTERN TEAM, INCLUDING BILL QUANDT OF NSC AND THEN STAY OUT THERE DISCUSSING THE UPCOMING CAMP DAVID SUMMIT. THAT IS TO SAY, MR. ATHERTON, MR. SAUNDERS,

AND MR. QUANDT AND THE SECRETARY. NO SECRET MEETINGS. THIS IS SIMPLY GOING TO BE A PLACE THEY CAN SIT AND TALK

ABOUT NOTHING BUT THE CAMP DAVID MEETING UNTIL TOMORROW
AFTERNOON.

Q. COULD YOU GIVE US SOME INFORMATION AS TO WHO WILL BE
IN THE ROOM WHEN THE CAMP DAVID MEETING TAKES PLACE WITH
SADAT AND BEGIN AND PRESIDENT CARTER?

A. I'M NOT POSITIVE HOW THAT SCENARIO IS GOING TO WORK.

Q. THERE IS NO INFORMATION SO FAR? DO YOU ANTICIPATE
THAT THERE WILL BE TIMES OF COURSE WHEN THE THREE OF THEM
WILL BE ALONE?

A. YES.
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Q. OH GOOD, IS THAT A MAJORITY OF THE TIME?

A. I DON'T KNOW. CHRISTOPHER

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